

DROUGHT MONTHLY BULLETIN, AUGUST 2008

Lamu District

Warning Stages

Timeline activities

Livelihood Zone	Stage	Trend
Mixed Farming: Cash crops/food crops/ horticulture	Normal	stable
Mixed Farming:/food crops/Cash crops /	Normal	stable
Livestock farming	Normal	stable
*Fishing		
*Formal employment/casual waged labour/business		
District	Normal	Stable

Situation overview

- An average 65mm of rainfall was recorded in the district during the month. The long rains season was coming to an end, thus less rainfall amounts were reported across the district.
- The quality and quantity of forage and pasture was average.
- Shallow wells were the main of water for households at 36 per cent, followed by boreholes and natural ponds at 27 per cent each. Other water sources included natural rivers and lakes at 9 per cent each. Most parts of the settlement schemes across the district were covered by piped water.
- Household access to water was average, with distance to water sources standing at 1.9 km, down from 1.7km in July.
- Milk production dropped from 1.03 litres per household per day in July to 0.97 litres. This was below the normal average and could be attributed to the upcoming dry season.
- Accessibility to food improved, while access to water eased. The situation in the district was, therefore, normal and the trend stable.
- Maize prices went up by 57 per cent, while beans prices rose by 50 per cent compared to the long term average of year 2006-2007.

- Cattle prices went up by 20 per cent compared to the long term average of 2006-07 period. Goat prices also rose by 13 per cent compared to the long term average of year 2006-2007.
- Eight households were reported to have moved into the district from Ijara with 2,000 heads of cattle in search for pasture.
- No major disease incidents were reported in the district.
- The nutrition status of children below five years improved, with the number of those rated as being at the risk of malnutrition (with MUAC levels of < 135mm) dropping to 2.2 per cent from 2.3 in July. The improvement was attributed to Ministry of Health interventions of giving vitamin A supplements and health education, alongside relief food distribution.

Current interventions

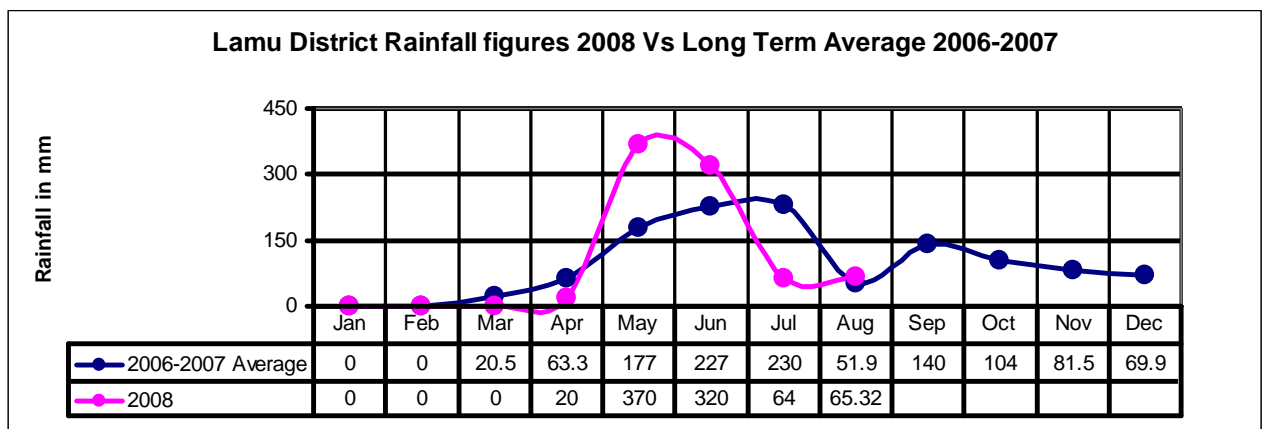
- Relief food distribution was done across the district with emphasis on secondary schools and other selected areas.
- 500 bags of maize (90kgs), 1,000 bags of rice (50kgs), 200 bags of green grams (50kgs) and 200 cartons of cooking oil were distributed.
- Post-harvest handling trainings ongoing courtesy of Ministry of Agriculture.

Recommendations

- The Ministry of Agriculture to provide district-wide trainings on proper post-harvest handling of harvested stock.
- Kenya Wildlife Service to intervene in human/wildlife conflicts across the district to reduce destruction of crops.

1.0 Environmental indicators (Stability)

1.1 Rainfall



- An average of 65mm of rainfall was recorded in the district.
- Livestock livelihood zone reported the highest at 86mm, while the mixed farming: food crops/cash crop livelihood zone reported the lowest at 30mm.

- The amounts received were, however, normal going by the 2006/07 long term averages.

1.2 Condition of natural vegetation and pasture

- The quality and quantity of forage and pasture was average. However, pests and wildlife posed a major constraint to access of forage.
- Average distances to grazing areas increased slightly from 2 km to 2.3 km.
- The distances were higher in the mixed farming: food crops/cash crop livelihood zone compared to the other two livelihood zones.
- This could be attributed to the ongoing cultivation in farms, making them inaccessible for grazing.
- The situation was normal at the time of the year.

1.3 Water sources and availability

- Shallow wells were the main of water for households at 36 per cent, followed by boreholes and natural ponds at 27 per cent each.
- Other water sources included natural rivers and lakes at 9 per cent each. Most parts of the settlement schemes across the district were covered by piped water.
- Household access to water was average. Distance to water sources was 1.9 km, down from 1.7km in July.
- The distances to water sources for households in the mixed farming: food/cash crop livelihood zone were the highest at 1.9 km, but within the normal range at the time of the year.

1.4 Emerging issues

1.4.1 Livestock migration

- Eight households were reported to have moved into the district from Ijara with 2,000 heads of cattle in search for pasture.

1.5 Implications on food security

- Rainfall, water sources and distances remained within the normal range compared to the 2006-7 average.
- However, the slight increase in grazing distances may indicate upcoming strain.

2.0 Rural indicators (food availability)

2.1 Livestock production

2.1.2 Livestock body condition

- The body conditions of cattle and shoats were average due to availability of water and pasture.

2.1.3 Livestock diseases

- Vaccination against CCPP and treatment against worms and ticks was ongoing. More than 5,000 animals were treated.

- Trypanosomiasis was endemic across all three livelihood zones. This was normal for the time of the year, though it was on an upward trend during the month due to tsetse infestation.

2.1.4 Milk production

- Milk production averaged 0.97 litres (750ml) per household per day, which was below last month's production of 1.03 litres.
- This was below the normal average and could be attributed to the upcoming dry season.
- Households in the livestock livelihood zone produced the highest amount of milk at 1.85 litres per household per day, down from 2.3 litres in July, while the mixed farming: food/cash crop livelihood zone produced the lowest at 0.73 litres per household per day.
- However, the situation was normal at the time of the year.

2.2 Crop production

2.2.1 Timeliness of crop production activities

- Harvesting of maize and other legumes was ongoing, with 50 per cent of the crops at the harvesting stage.
- Harvesting of vegetables started easing the prices in the market.
- Trainings on post-harvest handling were ongoing.

2.2.2 Pests and diseases

- Main crop pests reported were weevils, which affected the harvested crops.

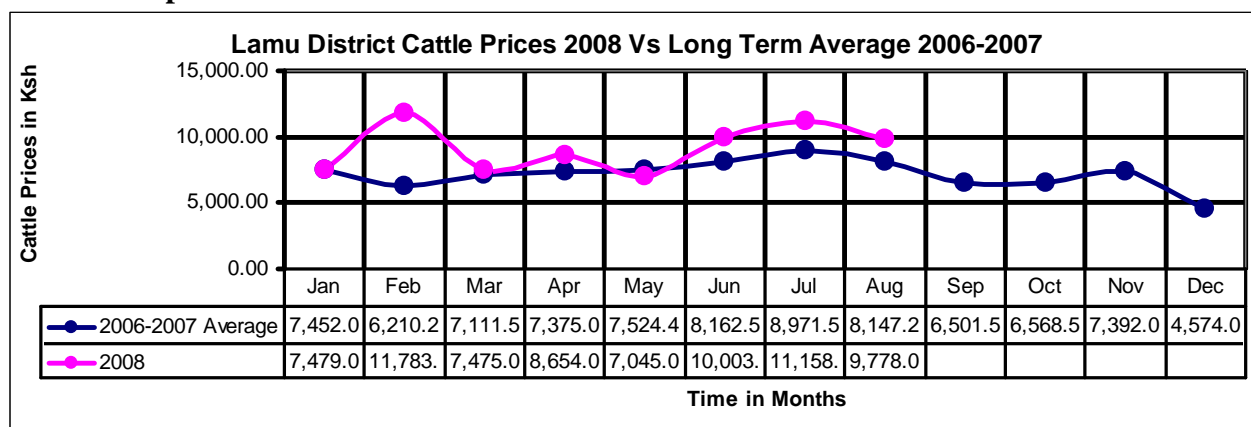
2.2.3 Implications on food security

- Decreasing milk production was an indication of a downward trend in food availability, mainly in the pastoral areas.
- Increasing availability of food in households made most parts of the district food secure.

3.0 Access to food

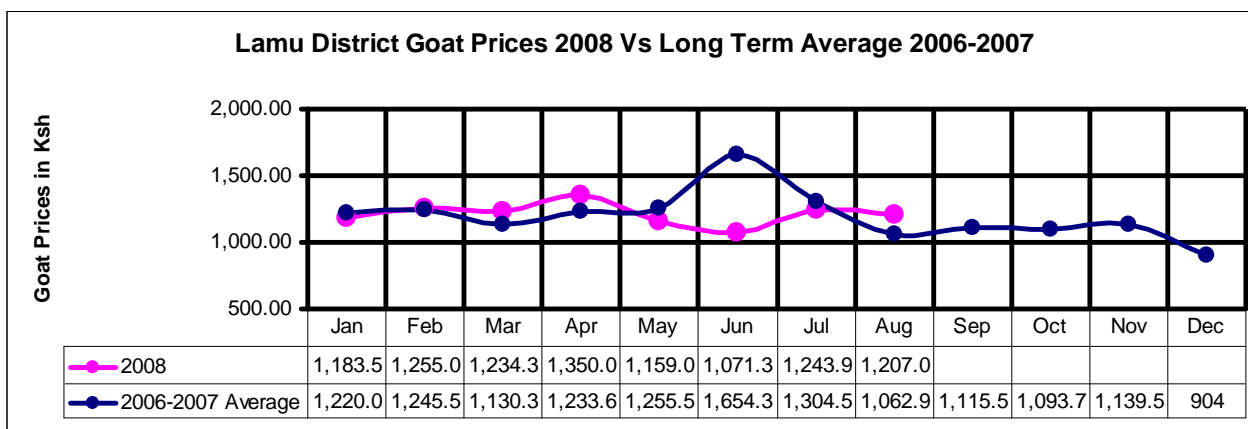
3.1 Livestock marketing

3.1.1 Cattle prices



- The average cattle price at farm-gate level was Ksh 9,778, lower than July price of Ksh11,158. This was attributed to availability of food at household level.
- This was above the long term mean of Ksh 8,142 for 2006/07 period.
- Lowest cattle prices were recorded in the mixed farming: food crops /cash crops livelihood zone at Ksh 9,000, while the livestock farming livelihood zone recorded the highest at Ksh10,557.
- The trend was normal at the time of the year, going by 2006/7 average.

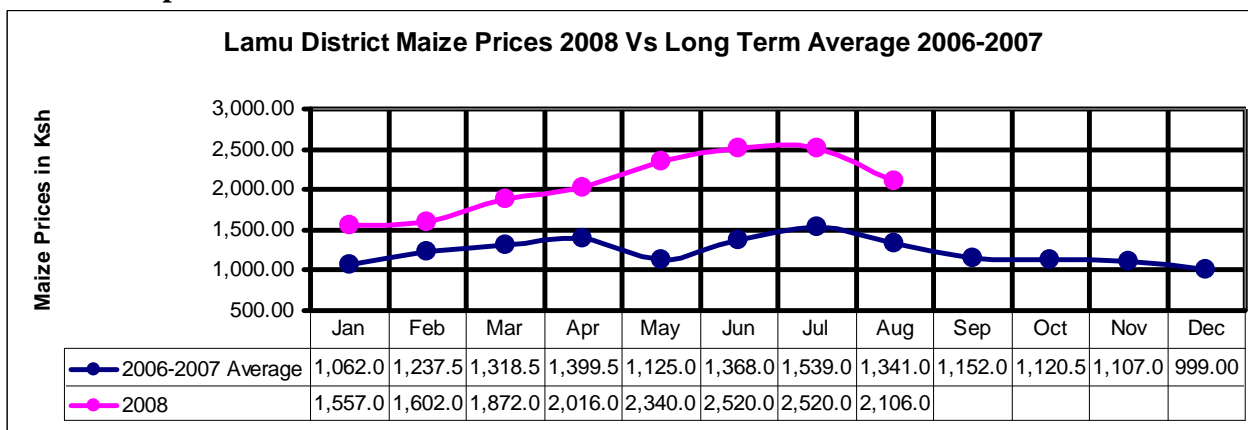
3.1.2 Goat prices



- The average goat price at farm-gate was Ksh1,207, which was slightly lower than July's Ksh 1,243 but higher than the long term average of Ksh 1,062 for the 2006/07 period.
- The lowest prices were recorded in the livestock farming livelihood zone, mixed farming: food crops /cash crops livelihood zone at Ksh 1,164, while the highest recorded at the mixed farming: Cash crops/food crops/ horticulture livelihood zone was Ksh1,250.

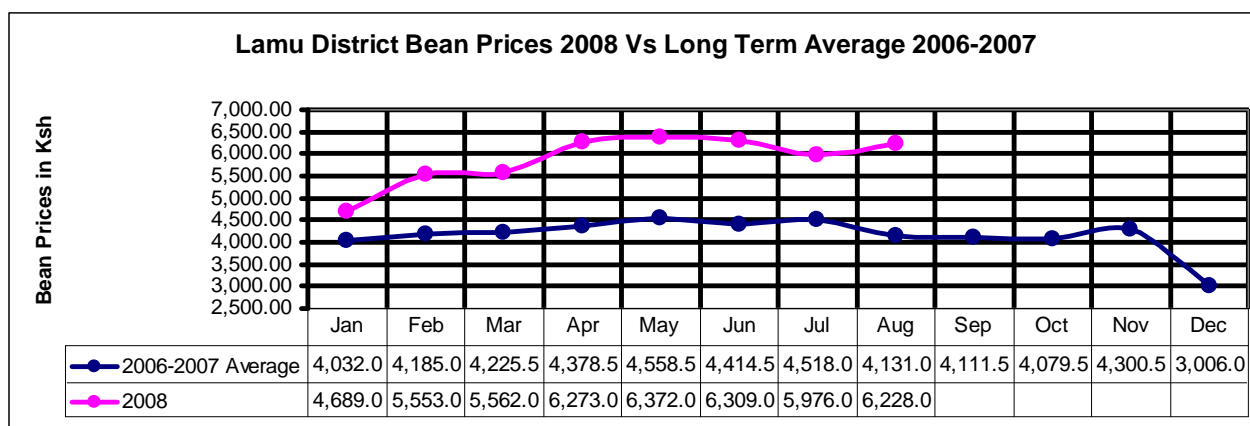
3.2 Crop prices

3.2.1 Maize prices



- Maize prices averaged Ksh 2,106 per 90kg bag, lower than July price of Ksh 2,520 owing to availability due to the recent harvest.
- This was above the long term mean Ksh1,341 recorded during the 2006/07 period.
- The situation was normal at the time of the year compared to the long term average.

3.2.2 Beans prices



- Average price of beans were Ksh 6,228 per 90Kg bag, which was higher than last month's Ksh 5,976 and higher than the long term average of Ksh 4,131 for the 2006/07 period.
- This was a deviation from the normal trend going by 2006-2007 average.

3.3 Income

3.3.1 Crop income

- Income from crops was mainly through vegetables and legumes.

3.3.2 Livestock income

- Sale of livestock and livestock products accounted for 4.2 per cent and 7.2 per cent of total household income sources in the district respectively. This was higher than July's 3 per cent and 8.5 respectively.
- Livestock sales were recorded in the mixed farming: food crops/cash crop and livestock livelihood zones. This was a normal trend for the district at the time of the year.

3.3.3 Other income

- Casual labour was the main source of income during the month, accounting for 59 per cent of the total household income. This was lower than last month's 61 per cent.
- The highest rate was recorded in the mixed farming: food crops/cash crop livelihood zone and the lowest in the livestock livelihood zone.
- Other sources included petty trade and formal employment at 13 per cent and 6.9 per cent respectively.

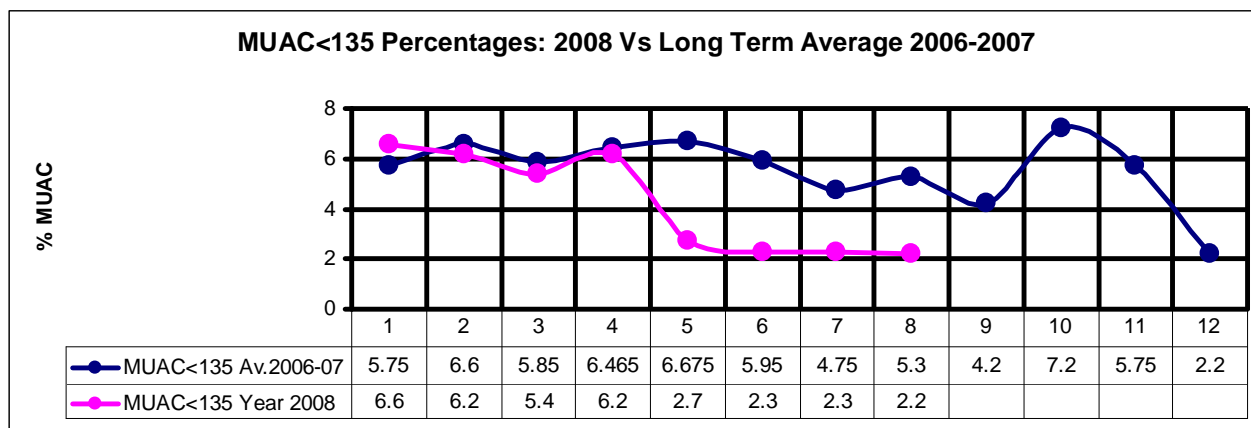
- This was normal at the time of the year.

3.4 Implications on food security

- There was no major shift in income sources but the situation in the district was normal going by the long-term average.

4 Utilisation of food

4.1 Nutrition status



- The number of children in the district at the risk of malnutrition (with MUAC levels of < 135mm) was 2.2 per cent compared to 2.3 in July.
- The situation was stable owing to upcoming harvest season and Ministry of Health interventions of giving vitamin A supplements and health education, alongside relief food distribution.
- The livestock farming livelihood zone reported the highest percentage of MUAC levels at 2.6 per cent, with the mixed farming: Cash crops/cash crop livelihood zone reporting the lowest at 1.8 per cent.

4.2 Health

- No major human disease incidents were reported in the district during the month.

5.0 Current interventions

- Relief food distribution was done across the district with emphasis on secondary schools and other selected areas.
- 500 bags of maize (90kgs), 1,000 bags of rice (50kgs), 200 bags of green grams (50kgs) and 200 cartons of cooking oil were distributed.
- Post-harvest handling trainings ongoing courtesy of Ministry of Agriculture.

6.0 Recommendations

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